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TAGS: [EAGR](#) [ECON](#) [PREL](#) [TBIO](#) [SENV](#) [KFLU](#) [OA](#) [SA](#)
SUBJECT: BAN ON SAUDI POULTRY DUE TO AVIAN INFLUENZA MAKES
QATAR DIG DEEPER

REF: DOHA 1043

¶1. The World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) announced November 13 the reoccurrence of Avian Influenza in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). Based on the OIE finding of H5N1 in the KSA, Qatar's Minister of Municipal Affairs and Agriculture, Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Khalifa Al-Thani, issued a Ministerial Decree November 15 banning the import of all poultry products, including eggs, frozen and solid chickens, and young chicks from the KSA. Dr. Gail Fraser Chanpong, Director of Public Health at Qatar's National Health Authority, informed all heads of units of the Ports Health and Food Section of the Public Health Department November 15 of the ban. Dr. Chanpong told us December 3 that the initial period of the ban would be three months, but could be extended depending on subsequent findings of the OIE.

¶2. Since the ban took effect, Emboffs have noted intermittent supplies of fresh eggs in the local marketplace. Local and regional supplies of eggs have not kept up with demand. While eggs from the United Arab Emirates have been spotted, much of the current egg supply is arriving from Brazil. Although prices vary, Emboff noted December 2 that the price for a 30-egg tray at a local supermarket had recently risen from Qatari Riyal (QR) 9.95 (USD 2.74) to QR 20.00 (USD 5.49), an increase of more than 100 percent.

¶3. Comment: The already high inflationary pressure in the Qatari marketplace (see reftel) has only been exacerbated by the price rise in the poultry market due to the H5N1 outbreak in the KSA. Poultry and eggs are important food staples, especially among the large expatriate population of Qatar.

RATNEY